Government of India for tackling the arsenic problem in 24 Parganas under bilateral assistance from Germany. The project was received on 27th April, 1995 and is under examination by the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission.

Involvement of Zila Parishads in the planning of Ninth Five Year Plan

6529. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made it mandatory for the involvement of Zila Parishads in over-all planning for the 9th Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the guidelines issued to State Governments in this regard; and

(c) whether such a process is already in place; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS & EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRI UTTAMBHAI PATEL): (a) to (c) District Planning is a separate process, different from the overall planning for the five year plan. Vide article 243 ZD of the Constitution,. the District Planning Committees will consolidate the plans prepared by the panchayats and municpalities in the district and will prepare a draft development plan for the district as a whole. Some of the elected members of the district level panchayats will be elected to the district planning committee and hence, Zila Parishads also have their role in the district planning. Finer details would follow from the States' Legislations on Panchayats and Nagar Palikas.

Letters written by MPs

6530. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL *Alias* MEEM AFZAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of letters written by the Members of Parliament to the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment during the period from 1st April, 1994 to 31st March, 1995;

(b) what is the number of letters acknowledged out of them;

(c) what is the number of letters in respect of which final replies were sent; and

(d) what is the break-up of final letters issued by the Ministry containing positive and negative replies respectively?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS & EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRI UTTAMBHAI PATEL): (a) to (d) During the period from 1st April, 1994 to 31st March, 1995, 334 letters from Members of Parliament were received in the Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment. Out of these, 296 letters were acknowledged and final replies have already been sent in respect of 241 letters. It is not possible to classify all the final replies sent, as 'positive' or 'negative'.

Proposal to generate millions of Mandays Employment

6531. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to generate millions of mandays employment during the financial year 1995-96;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how many such mandays employment are likely to be generated in the State of Madhya Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS & EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRI UTTAMBHAI PATEL): (a) to (c) The employment generation target of 920.71 million mandays at all India level and 95.80 million mandays in Madhya Pradesh have

been fixed under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (including Intensive Jawahar Rozgar Yojana) during the year 1995-96. Under the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), however, no targets of employment generation are fixed as the E/S is a demand-driven scheme.

Shortage of Drinking Water in Orissa

6532. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the entire State of Orissa, particularly southern and western Orissa, are facing acute shortage of drinking water;

(b) if so, the steps taken to remove the drinking water shortage in Orissa; and

(c) the specific steps taken to ensure potable drinking water supply in the undivided Koraput and Kalahandi districts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS & EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRI UTTAMBHAI PATEL): (a) No, Sir, However, in certain difficult and scarcity areas, uncovered and partially covered habitations are facing shortage of drinking water.

(b) In the affected areas, alternative sources of water supply, piped water supply schemes, extra deepwell hand pump are being provided to meet the situation. The State Government has drawn up a draft action plan for coverage of uncovered and partially covered habitations.

(c) the specific steps taken to ensure potable drinking water supply in the undivided Koraput and Kalahandi districts include a three month action plan upto June, 1995 to provide drinking water in scarcity prone areas, mobilsing additional indigenously built rigs for deployment in the inaccessible areas, deployment of all terrain fast moving rigs and affective repairs and maintenance of tube wells.

Prevention of contamination of Drinking Water in Villages

6533. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) how many villages have so far been covered to prevent contamination of drinking water, chemically and biologically, in the whole of the country, particularly in Bihar;

(b) the details of the plans to cover the remaining villages; and

(c) by when it is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS & EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRI UTTAMBHAI PATEL): (a) The objective of Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission and State Sector Minimum Needs Programme is to provide safe drinking water in the identified problem villages and partially covered villages through various schemes at the stage of their commissioning. Where the existing sources are effected with chemical and bacteriological contamination alternative safe sources, treatment measures and treatment plants like defluoridation/desalination/iron removal plants are taken up. Apart from the villages covered through treatment plants, 161576 identified problem villages of 1985 survey have been provided safe drinking water facilities upto 31.3.1995. These include all the identified 9199 problem villages in Bihar, which have been covered fully or partially with safe drinking water facilities.

(b) 146 problem villages of 1985 survey remained to be provided safe drinking water as on 31.3. 1995. The States have formulated appropriate schemes for coverage of these villages under the State Sector MNP and ARWSP, Sub-Missions etc.

(c) The remaining problem villages are likely to be provided safe drinking water by the end of 1995-96.